

Issue #2
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To ensure you receive future newsletters, fact sheets, and other information from the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy—please visit <http://www.acptp.org/network.html>

Talking With Kids A Parent's Guide to Sex Education

For many reasons parents often postpone talking to their children about sex. It may be the subject is hard or uncomfortable to discuss, parents might feel embarrassed about the topic, or worry they might not know how to answer the questions their children have about this issue. Regardless of the reasons for avoiding the subject, children want to hear from their parents about this very important subject.

The following information is provided to help parents open the lines of communication. The information is adapted from a resource reprinted by Advocates for Youth with permission of the National PTA.

1. **Start early**—children hear about and are forced to cope with tough issues at an early age. Parents have a wonderful opportunity to talk with their children about important issues before anyone else can confuse their children with incorrect

information or explanations that lack the sense of values they want to instill.

2. **Initiate conversations**—kids won't always feel comfortable coming to their parents with their questions. Parents should find opportunities to begin the discussions.
3. **Create an open environment**—children want to hear about difficult subjects from their parents, but only if they feel you will be open to their questions.
4. **Communicate important values**—research shows that children want and need moral guidance from their moms and dads; parents should not hesitate to make their beliefs clear.
5. **Listen**—listening carefully to children builds self-esteem by letting them know they are important.

This can lead to valuable discussions about a wide variety of sensitive issues.

6. **Be honest**—children deserve honest answers and explanations. If answers aren't straightforward, children make up their own fantasy explanations.
7. **Be patient**—it may take some time for a child to verbalize their question. Resist the impulse to finish their sentences—patient listening allows children to think at their own pace and lets them know they are worthy of the time.
8. **Use everyday opportunities to talk**—there isn't always time for long talks and kids resist formal discussions. Use everyday moments as occasions for important conversations.
9. **Talk again and again**—there is a lot to absorb!

Board of Directors:

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Commissioner
Alabama Dept. of Human Resources

Dr. Donald Williamson (*ex-officio*)
State Health Officer

From the Executive Director

In early September I attended a meeting in Minneapolis, MN of state pregnancy prevention campaign directors. Convened by the Centers for Disease Control and Advocates for Youth—the meeting focused on promoting the use of science-based approaches (SBA) in teen pregnancy prevention efforts. A science based approach includes the following:

1. Using demographic, epidemiological and social science research to identify populations at risk of early pregnancy and/or sexually transmitted infections, and to identify the risk and protective factors for those populations.
2. Using health behavior or health education theory for selecting risk and protective factors that will be addressed by the program, and guide the selection of intervention activities.
3. Using a logic model to link risk and protective factors with program strategies and outcomes.
4. Selecting, adapting if necessary, and implementing programs that are either science-based or are a promising program.
5. Conducting process and outcome evaluation of the implemented program, and modifying approach based on results.

During the ACPTP 2007 teen pregnancy prevention conference Tom Klaus, Advocates for Youth, discussed the importance of SBAs. For more information about this issue, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/AdolescentReproHealth/DefineScienceApproach.htm>

Welcome New Board Members

The Board of Directors of the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy welcomes the following new members to the work of the organization:

Dr. Mary Blankson—Physician, Jefferson County Health Department. She is rejoining the board after an absence of one year.

Dr. Judy Manning—Regional Director, United Methodist Children's Home, Selma, AL.

Coach Tony Pierce—Founder, Fathers In Touch, and Defensive Coordinator of Alabama State University football team.

Ms. Cynthia Stewart—Assistant Principal, Chilton County High School.

We are pleased to welcome these individuals to the Board of Directors. Their passion for understanding and addressing the needs of adolescents will enhance the work of the organization and provide valuable insight to the Campaign's goal of reducing teen pregnancy in Alabama.

One in Three: The Case for Wanted and Welcomed Pregnancy

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy published in May 2007 a study detailing analysis that indicated **about one in three pregnancies in America are unwanted**. Although teenagers have made significant progress in reducing their rates of pregnancy and childbearing (*in the United States the teen pregnancy rate declined 36 percent between 1990 and 2002 and the teen birth rate dropped by one-third between 1991 and 2005*) there has been no comparable progress among young adults. In fact, the National Campaign estimates that between 1994 and 2001, the rate of unwanted pregnancy in the United States increased from 31.9 to 33.2—an increase in every age group except among teens.

In response to these statistics the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy has expanded its mission. They will continue to work on preventing teen pregnancy because it is still the case that one-third of teen girls become pregnant before they are 20, and the rate of teen pregnancy in the United States remains far higher than in other comparable countries. But, the National Campaign will also focus on reducing the high level of unwanted pregnancy in the United States among young adults in their twenties — where the majority of such pregnancies occur.

The Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy will continue to work in Alabama to reduce teen pregnancy, but will not expand its mission to include a larger population. However, we will continue to report on the work of the National Campaign to reduce unwanted pregnancies in young adults.

Portions of this article were reprinted with permission from the National Campaign. For information about the full report please visit www.TheNationalCampaign.org.

Preventing Teen Pregnancy Around Alabama

A meeting of individuals and organizations interested in re-establishing a teen pregnancy prevention coalition in Jefferson County will be held in Birmingham in late October, 2007. The meeting will be convened by the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. If you are interested in attending this meeting please contact April Smith, Program Coordinator, Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 334-265-8004 or email asmith412@bellsouth.net.

YEAH Ministries Incorporated (Youth, Empowerment, Activism and Heartbeat) is hosting an abstinence workshop at the historic Redmont Hotel in Birmingham, LA on **October 12-13, 2007**. The feature of the workshop will be the WAIT (Why Am I Tempted) Training. Registration cost is \$350 and will include the WAIT Training manual and materials, t-shirt, bag and lunch on Friday and Saturday. For additional details about the training call the YEAH Ministries local coordinator at 205-815-3755.

The Health Committee of the Dallas County Children's Policy Council is hosting an event on **October 25, 2007** for faith leaders in their county. The purpose of the event is to engage the faith community in a discussion about the issue of teen pregnancy in their Dallas County and to consider hosting a county-wide event that will encourage teens to examine their attitudes and expectations with regard to relationships and teen pregnancy.



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We're on the web :
www.acptp.org

Events, resources, etc.

Events

- **October** is "Let's Talk Month" visit <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/news/events/letstalk.htm> for more information.
- **April 29, 2008** Fifth Annual Teen Pregnancy Prevention Conference offered by the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and hosted by Children's Hospital. www.acptp.org

If you would like to have an event posted in our next newsletter, please contact www.acptp.org

Resources

ACPTP has available for loan copies of studies and reports by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. Also available are the following books:

All Kids Are Our Kids

Peter L. Benson

Why Do They Act That Way—A Survival Guide to the Adolescent Brain for You and Your Teen

David Walsh, Ph.D.

Why Kids-Of All Ages-Need to Hear It—NO

David Walsh, Ph.D.

Preventing Teen Pregnancy

Douglas Kirby, Ph.D.

For a complete list of resources visit www.acptp.org.

Etc.

Partnerships and relationships with Alabama's Department of Children's Affairs, Department of Human Resources, Department of Public Health, Department of Education, and other community groups are important in the work of reducing teen pregnancy in Alabama. The Campaign offers workshops on the issue of teen pregnancy and teen childbearing in Alabama and may provide county specific data and statistics on this issue. Call us at 334-265-8004 for more information.

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